

A  
LETTER  
VVITTEN

BY  
*A FRENCH GENT:*  
of the King of BOHEMIA  
his Army:

Concerning the Emperour  
FERDINAND his Embassage  
into FRANCE.

*Translated out of the French Coppie.*

*Ferdinand II, Emp. of  
Ger.*

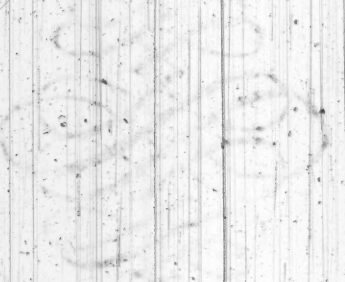


Printed at *Flushing.*  
1620.

THE  
LONDON

LIBRARY

OF THE



1851



(1)

A

LETTER WRITTEN BY A  
FRENCH GENTLEMAN, OF  
THE KING OF BOHEMIA HIS ARMY,  
Concerning the Emperour FERDI-  
NAND, his Embassage into  
FRANCE.

**N**OT to meddle with (what euery man knowes) the insatiate Ambition of the House of AVSTRIA, in both the braunches thereof, which all Christendome shortly will not bee enough to content, as hauing long since prepared the way to that Fift Monarchy, which certaine Religious Persons Confidents of *Spaine* affirme to bee as necessary for the preservation and increase of the Catholicke Religion, as is the Popes Spirituall Monarchy. Nor to speake of the Cruelties which the Princes of this House haue giuen way to, in the *Indyes*, in the *Low-Countries*, and in all places where they haue extended their Dominions; nor the Designs or Attempts they haue had (open or secret) against *England*, *Ireland*, *Venice*, or *France* it selfe, wherein they haue nourished partialities and indeauoured to suppress the Lawes Salique. For as for *Germany*, *Bohemia*, and *Hungarie*, (Electiue Estates) who is ignorant that to perpetuate them to

A them-

(2)

themselves, they haue sought to make them Hereditary and Patrimonies to their Familie?

Not to mention also the scornfull fashion of the two last Emperours, who would neuer send to *France* to performe office of Congratulation or Condoling, when it is well knowne that in their Courtes, were publicke reioycings for the Murthers committed vpon the Persons of our two last *Henryes*, of famous and immortal memory, refusing to acknowledge the last for a King or a Catholicke, till long time after his absolution, when they saw him Victorious, Tryumphant, and Absolute in his Gouvernement; And yet when that Great and good Prince, was pleased to vse his Credit and Mediation, for according the difference betweene certaine great Princes of the Empire (friends and allyes of this Crowne,) one of the Emperour *Rodulphs* principall Officers, spared not to say, that the King of *France* might meddle with the affayres of his owne Kingdome, and let others rest: When at that time there was on foote a question, touching a certaine litigious Territory, which the saide Emperour pretended to bee deuolued to him, and lay, otherwise, very fitt for him and one of his Brothers. Not I say to mention or repeate what hath fallen so often vnder the Pennes and discourses of men, and whereof no man almost is ignorant:

I will



(3)

I will onely succinctly answer to the Five principall reasons, framed to induce the King to assist the Emperour *Ferdinand*, now stript of the Kingdomes of *Bohemia*, and *Hungarie*.

I.

The first is Religion, the ordinary pretext of such as vndertake to inuade others, or to draw from them ayde and supplies. It is true that the hard measure offerd the Protestants of *Bohemia*, by the Officers of the Emperour, (as is apparent by the frequent Complaintes and remonstrances presented by the saide Protestants to his Imperiall Maiesty, and of late by the Apologie and declaration Published in diuers Languages) gaue the first hint and occasion to the last Combustion, and brought forth the fruites and changes that wee now beholde. But this is not the first time that the *Bohemians* haue in generall complained of the force offered their Priuiledges, and Liberties; and of the breach of the fundamentall Lawes of their Estate, (which is in very deede Electiue) and that the Imperiall branch of *Austria*, hath endeauoured to make it Hereditary, as well as the Empire; to the preiudice of the Imperiall Liberties and Constitutions, and particularly to that of the Golden *Bull*, which expresly forbids the perpetuating of the Succession in one

and the same Family. In a worde then, it is a busines of State and not of Religion : Besides that, the Bohemians make it appeare (and they thinke with sufficient prooffe) that *Ferdinand* was Elected King of *Bohemia* by the surprise of three or foure Officers of that Kingdome, Pensioners and Partisans of *Spaine*, without calling thereto the assistance of the three incorporate Prouinces, *Silesia*, *Moravia*, and *Lusatia*, which haue euer had, and ought to haue, their free voyces and assents. Again it is most true, that at such time as the Estates of the saide Kingdome, expelled the *Iesuites* (whome they charged as the Authors of that mischiefe) they tooke into their protection, all other orders of Church-men, who euen to this houre haue not receiued any interruption in their Ecclesiasticall Functions, or in the free inioying of their reuenues and Benefices. Besides that, King *Frederick* at his entrance, tooke a solemne oath for their maintenance, and protection, and signified as much to the King in his Letters, Dated at *Amberg* the Twentieth of October last. And questionlesse if hee should proceed otherwise, he should bee ill aduised, in regard that a good and great part of that Estate consists of Catholickes. It is then a meere Columny to say that it is a busines of Religion, and that the Designe of the Protestantes is to suppress the Catho-



Catholickes. The falshood also of this assertion is prooued by the Suffrages, that a Prince Catholique had in his Election to *Bohemia*, and in like number as had another Prince of the *Lutheran* profession: each of them hauing had fixe Voyces: And since all this is matter of Fact, the prooffe or disproofe thereof is most easie.

## 2.

The Second reason alledged, is Alliance: because the Emperour *Ferdinand*, is by the Mother side Vnckle to our Queene, whose Husband they say is tyed in respect of so straight a Bond to assist him: But the most straight Bond is of a King to his Subiectes, as of a Father to his Children; and the safety of an Estate surpasseth all other considerations. The transcendent Greatnes of this House hath cost *France* deare enough in our dayes, without seeking farther prooffe of this in other Histories then in that of the last League; vnlesse we will now approoue, what was almost two thousand yeares since faide of our Nation, That wee assoone forget an Iniury, as a Benefit. This also is a point of Consideration, that the King in making himselfe a party for the House of *Austria*, diuideth his Subiects that are of different Religion, before the woundes of the State bee through-

thoroughly closed; offendeth his Oldest and surest Friends and Allies; and bringeth his Kingdomes into the danger of a Warre abroad, and of trouble at home. For if hee imploy his forces against the Palatinat for the diuersion demanded; what other effects may hee expect? Since the Palatinat during the absence of King *Fredericke*, is vnder the Protection of the Estates of the vnited Prouinces, and of the Princes of the Vnion. Againe, the King (shall as in a brauery) empty his Treasure for a busines farre from vs; and which concerneth not directly nor indirectly, his Estate or Person; being (as I haue saide) a matter neither of Religion nor Conscience. In yeelding also Supplies to one party before hee heare the other, his Maiesty tacitly Condemneth one, and is Guilty of that which all the Lawes of the world and hee himselfe forbids, in ordinary Suites and differences, betweene party and party; it being likely that before many dayes bee past, the saide King *Fredericke*, his Friends and Allyes, will giue his Maiesty an account of what hath passed in this busines, and acquaint him with the cause and motiues of so great a change and enterprise.

3.

The third inducement is the assistance and  
Pro-



Protection that Kings owe one another; especially such as are in distresse : But let the Emperour be pleased to remember how hee and his Predecessors, haue euermore neglected *France*; expresly forbidden the Princes of the Empire, Friends and Allyes of this Crowne, to assist our Kings of later times, in their necessities; much lesse that they haue euer supplied them with men or money : Let him remember also the refusall, hee lately made the Duke of *Neuers*, of the Kings mediation, fauour, and authority, for settling the Affayres of *Bohemia*, when they were yet in Good tearmes; I meane during the Life of the Emperour *Mathias*, and many monthes before this new Election. But if the King will fauour one of the partyes (as by reason of State and for diuersion it hath beene at other times in practice) there may be shewed to his Maiestie, halfe a hundred Letters of the deceased King, and of some of the Kings his predecessors, contayning thanks for the good & notable seruices performed by the house of the Prince Palatine and his Allyes, to their Persons and Crownes in their occasions of need. The instructions giuen to such as haue bene within these thirtie or fortie yeares, sent into *Germany* confirme this : Besides, the straight alliance that King *Henry* the great (a most wise Prince) settled betweene him and the body of the Vnion in *Germany*,

*Germany*, a small time before his death; approved since by the King now Raigning, and by the Queene his Mother then Regent, when the Duke of *Deux Ponts* came into this Kingdom to condole the last Kings murthering. In like sort the Contracts & Obligations vpon prooffe in the Chamber of Accounts for many summes of money, lent and paid before hand, by the said house of the Prince Palatine, his neere kindred and Allyes, (of a part whereof *France* is yet a debtor.) These (I say) are proofes sufficient of what I haue saide, and oblige his Maiestie to lend his assistance rather to this then to the other party.

## 4.

The fourth induction, is the dangerous example of Revoltes (for with such tearmes doe they qualifie this change, to make it the more odious, without distinguishing between Kingdomes Electiue and Hereditary; Especially since between Electiue Kingdomes, there is difference of Condition as all the world knowes. And it is to bee noted, that at the Sacring and Coronation of the Kinges of *Bohemia*, the King first sweares to obserue the Lawes and Priuiledges of the Countrey, and then the people take the Oath of fidelitie. And at that ioyfull entry (as it is tearmed) of *Antwerp*, which is the  
solemn-



solemnity of Creating and receiuing a newe Duke of *Brabant*, it is deliuered in expresse tearmes that hee declares himselfe fallen from his Right and Dignity, if hee make not good the Articles that hee hath promised and sworne to the people. So did the deceased Duke of *Anion*, last Duke of *Brabant* promise and pronounce in the yeare, 1583. For betweene the proceedings of the *Low Countreyes*, and of *Bohemia*, there is a great resemblance. The enacti- ons and Cruelties of the Duke of *Alua*, were in- differently exercised vpon the Protestants and Catholickes, The Count of *Egmont* (whose head hee stroke off) was no Hugonet: no more then was the most part of so many thousand o- ther of all Ages, Sexes, and Conditions, whom hee brag'd, at his departure thence, that he had made an en<sup>d</sup> of by the hand of the Hangman. And it is most true, that the inhumane and bar- barous courses taken by the Count of *Bucquoy*, for these fifteene or sixteene Monthes, in the Warre against the *Bohemians*, thinking with Fire and Sword to bring them to obedience (which is wisdom against the hayre) serued but to hasten the reiection of *Ferdinand*, and the Election of *Fredericke*: Not to mention the obstinate denyall, made to admit or heare the Deputies of the Estates of that Kingdome, and of the Prouinces incorporate vnto it, at the  
B last

last assembly at *Franckfort*, when the saide *Ferdinand* was aduanced to the Crowne Imperi-  
all : And of this kinde of wisdom, was also  
the Refusall made lately by the same Empe-  
rour *Ferdinand* to his Subiectes, of the lower  
*Austria*, and *Stiria*, who made offer to serue  
him with their Liues and goods, in withstan-  
ding the Inuasions of the *Bohemians*, conditio-  
nally that hee would Confirm their Priuiled-  
ges, and graunt them free vse of their Religion :  
It is hee himselfe, that in the like case saide  
once, That he had rather bee a Prince without  
Subiects, then to haue any, of a contrary Reli-  
gion to his owne. This humour of his ex-  
pressed in that Language, made such an Im-  
pression and apprehension of him in his peo-  
ple, ( though hee be held otherwise a Good  
and a wise Prince ) as it was not the least reason  
of the Alteration wee now see. Happy are  
those Princes, that hauing neede of Counsell,  
are able to make choyce of Wise and Faith-  
full Counsellours, such as haue no other ayme  
but their Maisters aduantage, without re-  
gard to their owne particuler interest. There  
haue beene in this House, Great and Famous  
Princes for Valour and Vertue, but these of  
later time haue beene ill Serued and ill adui-  
sed. Witnes their Losses in the *Low Coun-  
tries*, and now, and to come ; if they againe  
take



take not the way they haue left, of sweetnes and gentlenes.

5.

The Fift and last, principall reason is, That the Turke will infallibly, lay holde on the occasion of these Combustions, to serue his turne, and to aduaunce his Conquests, to the hurt of Christendome; which is not vnlikely? And if hee doe it not, it is either the fault of his little wisdome, or of his weaknesse; which yet may bee auoyded by leauing this new King in quiet Possession, now that he is Elected, and that without Suite or labouring of his owne, nay without his owne Knowledge, and beeing forcedly as it were carryed on, by the Counsell of his Friends, to the Acceptance of this Crowne, which hath beene since set on his Head; accompanied with all the Formes and Solemnities due and Correspondent to the fundamentall and most auncient Lawes of *Bohemia*; a Kingdome Free and Priuiledged if euer any: Whereas, on the Contrary, if hee bee molested; and dispossessed; Hee will be, by the law of Nature, and of Reason, inforced to inuite his Friendes and Allyes to ayde him; As the Princes of *Germany*; the Kings of *Denmarke*, and *Sweden*; the *Hans Townes*, and the

Protestant Cantons of *Switzerland*, with whom hee and some other Princes of the Vnion, are Confederate for their common Defence. Not to speake of *England*, and the Vnited Prouinces, whence hee cannot but receiue Powerfull succours. Not to speake also of certaine Princes, and Estates Catholicke, which holde good Correspondence with him: Nor of the Prince of *Transilvania*, who offreth him his best meanes and Forces.

In the meane time, it is a false affirmation that the said King entertayneth Intelligence or commerce with the *Turke*, hauing Friends so many and so mighty in Christendome, without being driuen to seeke them else where with so great danger. But if the Prince of *Transilvania* Fortifie himselfe on that side, (as hee hath heretofore done) for his better setling in his Principallity, at such time as the House of *Austria* sought to crosse him, as it had donne before, the vnfortunate *Gabriel Battori*: and disturbe him in his Possession, it is beside the purpose and concerneth not *Bohemia*; nor is in any sort applyable to this new King. But who knoweth not, howe the greater part of *Hungary*, and of other Principalities of that part of Christendome, are in conclusion fallen into the handes of the Common Enemy of Christendome?

: In



(13)

: In a worde, this Busines is the true Touch-  
stone whereby to distinguish betweene good  
and ill Counsells, and to discerne the true  
*French* from the *Spaniard*, or fauourers of the  
Spanish Party.

\* \* \*

---

*FINIS.*

---